AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

1. (Currently Amended) Computer apparatus for information retrieval, comprising:

a. a bus;

b. information storage accessible through ~~said~~ the bus and containing stored information;

c. a communications interface connected to ~~said~~ the bus; and

d. a processor connected to said bus, said processor configured to receive search queries over said communications interface, to process ~~those~~ the search queries against the stored information ~~stored in information storage~~, and to provide a list of terms used in the search queries presented over a period of time to be selectively added to the stored information ~~stored in information storage~~.

2. (Original) Apparatus of claim 1 in which a term to be selectively added is added to a document or file as a meta-tag.

3. (Original) Apparatus of claim 2 in which a term to be selectively added is also added to an inverted index.

4. (Currently Amended) An information retrieval system, comprising:

a. a network;

b. a plurality of users connected to said network[[.]]; and

c. at least one server connected to said network, said server containing stored items and providing search access to ~~a plurality of documents and files stored on said server~~ the stored items in response to search queries submitted by users, ~~said~~ the server configured to provide a list of terms used in the search queries over a period of time to be selectively added to at least one of the stored items ~~information stored in information storage~~.

5. (Original) Apparatus of claim 4 in which a term to be selectively added is added to a document or file as a meta-tag.

6. (Original) Apparatus of claim 5 in which a term to be selectively added is also added to an inverted index.

7. (Currently Amended) A method of enhancing information retrieval in an information retrieval system, comprising ~~the steps of~~:

a. ~~providing an element for~~ storing a list of queries submitted to a search engine;

b. ~~providing an element for~~ storing a list of search terms used in ~~those~~ the queries together with frequency of occurrence;[[,]] and

c. ~~providing an element for~~ selecting at least a portion of relatively high frequency search terms and processing each search term of ~~said~~ the portion for selective addition to documents or files stored in ~~said~~ the system as a meta-tag.

8. (Original) The method of claim 7 in which processing each term of said portion comprises presenting the term to a user together with at least identifiers of a number of documents or files stored in said system containing said term.

9. (Original) The method of claim 8 in which said processing includes presenting the term to a user together with at least portions of a document identified by one of said identifiers.

10. (Original) The method of claim 9 in which said term is presented to a user with portions of a document in a graphical user interface having a user activatable function for adding a term to said document as a meta-tag.

11. (Original) The method of claim 7 further comprising the step of providing an element for selectively adding said term to said document as a meta-tag.

12. (Original) The method of claim 11 further comprising the step of providing an element for adding information about the term added to said document as a meta-tag in an inverted index.

13. (Currently Amended) A method of enhancing information retrieval in an information retrieval system, comprising ~~the steps of~~:

a. ~~providing an element for~~ storing a list of terms used in queries together with frequency of occurrence, and

b. ~~providing an element for~~ adding at least one term selected from ~~said~~ the list based on frequency of occurrence to at least one document containing ~~said~~ the term as a meta-tag.

14. (Currently Amended) A method of enhancing information retrieval in an information retrieval system, comprising ~~the steps of~~:

a. ~~providing an element for~~ generating a master term ~~database~~ list of terms used in queries received by ~~said~~ the information retrieval system over a period of time,

b. ~~providing an element for~~ generating a new term list of terms used in queries received by ~~said~~ the information retrieval system during a later period of time which are not in ~~said~~ the master term list, and

c. using ~~said~~ the master term list and ~~said~~ the new term list as a source of terms for adding to documents containing ~~those~~ the terms as a meta-tag.

15. (Original) The method of claim 14 in which at least one term selected from terms from said master term list is used to identify documents or files containing said term to which said term may be added as a meta-tag.

16. (Original) The method of claim 14 in which at least one term selected from terms from said master term list is used to identify only documents or files containing said term which have been created or modified since the last time the master term list was used to identify documents or files, to which said term may be added as a meta-tag.

17. (Original) The method of claim 15 in which said new term database is used to identify documents or files containing said term to which said term may be added as a meta-tag.

18. (Currently Amended) A method of enhancing information retrieval in an information retrieval system, comprising ~~the steps of~~:

a. ~~providing an element for~~ sorting query terms presented to the information retrieval system by frequency of occurrence[[;]] to provide a term list;

b. eliminating noise words and stop words from the term list;

c. selecting a portion of ~~said~~ the term list containing the highest frequency terms; and

d. processing ~~those~~ the highest frequency terms as candidates for inclusion in documents or files containing the terms as a meta-tag.

19. (Currently Amended) A method of assisting a user in indexing a document created by the user ~~created~~, comprising ~~the steps of~~:

a. ~~providing an element for~~ extracting terms used in search queries presented to a search engine over a period of time; and

b. presenting ~~those~~ the extracted terms to ~~said~~ the user;[[.]]

c. receiving a user selection of terms; and

d. adding the received terms to a document as a meta-tag.

20. (Currently Amended) A method of enhancing information retrieval in ~~an information retrieval~~ a system containing stored documents, comprising ~~the steps of~~:

a. ~~providing an element for~~ identifying a stored document containing a term;

b. determining if ~~said~~ the stored document contains subject matter related to ~~said~~ the term; and

c. ~~providing an element for~~ selectively adding ~~said~~ the term to ~~said~~ the document as a meta-tag ~~if it does~~.

21. (Original) A method of operating an information retrieval system, comprising the steps of:

a. extracting terms used in search queries over a period of time;

b. identifying documents or files containing at least one of said terms; and

c. selectively adding said at least one of said terms to said document or file as a meta-tag.

22. (Original) The method of claim 21 in which said meta-tag is given more weight than other terms when ranking relevance of documents retrieved in response to a search query.

23. (Currently Amended) A computer program product, comprising:

a. a memory medium; and

b. a computer program stored on ~~said~~ the memory medium, ~~said~~ the computer program comprising instructions for storing a list of terms used in queries together with frequency of occurrence, and for adding at least one term selected from ~~said~~ the list based on frequency of occurrence to at least one document containing ~~said~~ the term as a meta-tag.

24. (Currently Amended) A computer program product, comprising:

a. a memory medium; and

b. a computer program stored on ~~said~~ the memory medium, ~~said~~ the computer program comprising instructions for generating a master term ~~database~~ list of terms used in queries received by an information retrieval system over a period of time, for generating a new term list of terms used in queries received by ~~said~~ the information retrieval system during a later period of time which are not in ~~said~~ the master term list, and for using ~~said~~ the master term list and ~~said~~ the new term list as a source of terms for adding to documents containing ~~those~~ the terms as a meta-tag.

25. (Currently Amended) A computer program product, comprising:

a. a memory medium; and

b. a computer program stored on said memory medium, said computer program comprising instructions for extracting terms used in search queries presented to a search engine over a period of time,~~; and~~ for presenting ~~those~~ the extracted terms to ~~said~~ the user, for receiving a user selection of terms, and for adding the received terms to a document as a meta-tag.

26. (Original) A computer program product, comprising:

a. a memory medium; and

b. a computer program stored on said memory medium, said computer program comprising instructions for extracting terms used in search queries over a period of

time, for identifying documents or files containing at least one of said terms and for selectively adding said at least one of said terms to said document or file as a meta-tag.